

COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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"As to what is called a Revolution principle, my opinion was this; that whenever those evils, which usually attend and follow a violent change of Government, were not in probability so pernicious as the grievance we suffer under a present power, then the public good will justify such a Revolution."

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SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

BATTLE OF TALAVERA.—From the tenor of Sir Arthur Wellesley's dispatch published last week, it was very easy to foresee, that, when the French account of the Battle came to be published, a doubt, at least, would be excited with respect to the party to whom the victory was due. The French account has now appeared under the heads of Talavera and of Paris, and is as follow: "*Talavera, July 29.*—The English army which was in Portugal under general Wellesley, after having joined the insurgents under Cuesta, had marched against the first corps, hoping, with triple numbers, to beat it, and effect its junction with the troops under Venegas.—Already had the English flattered themselves with getting to Madrid; but the events that have passed during the three days that have elapsed, have a good deal deranged the plan of the campaign. His majesty, after the affair of the 28th, continued to pursue the enemy, who arrived on the fine position of Talavera, and intrenched themselves. His dispositions announced an intention of maintaining himself to the last extremity; yet, after having been vigorously attacked by the French army, having lost a part of his infantry and a whole regiment of cavalry, he abandoned his position. In these circumstances the French have proved, as they have always done, that, whatever be the position and number of their enemies, they can overcome all obstacles. The English and insurgents sustained great loss: ours is inconsiderable.—General Latour Maubourg's division entered Talavera this morning.—*Paris, Aug. 9.*—We have letters from Santa Ollala, of the 29th ult. at ten p. m. which mention the new victory gained over the English, Portuguese, and insurgents. The loss of the English is enormous. We took 800 infantry prisoners, and a whole regiment of cavalry. This regiment was

"taken by one of ours which opened its ranks to receive the charge, and then cut off their retreat. The rest of the English column, which constituted the whole force of the enemy, is in full retreat."—The Morning Chronicle, which, for reasons best known to itself, is become apparently an ardent admirer of the Wellesleys, says of this French account, "Paris papers contain a most curious account of the battle of Talavera, which we have introduced into our columns for the amusement of our readers." Now, for my part, I must confess, that this extract from the Paris papers does appear to me to afford very little of what is generally called amusement; that is to say, to those who feel a strong desire, that our claim to the victory may be established.—It is true, that the French account may be false; nay, it is pretty certain, that, in some respects, it must be false. The Paris account and that of Talavera seem, also, to clash with one another. But, the worst of it is, that in the most material point of all, the French account agrees with that of Sir Arthur Wellesley, as nearly as was to be expected. I allude to the account of the prisoners made by the French; or rather, those which the French call *prisoners*, and which we call *missing*. The French say that they have taken 800 prisoners, and Sir Arthur Wellesley tells us, that there were in his army, 653 missing, together with 159 horses.—There is something in this account of Sir Arthur Wellesley, which I extremely dislike. He tells us, that he has taken "*some prisoners*;" but, he does not tell us how many; though he certainly had it in his power to give us information of the exact number; and, which is singular enough, while he omits to give us an account of what was within the reach of his own knowledge, he is very particular in giving an account of what he could know, only from rumour. He tells us that the loss of the enemy has been much greater than his own loss; that he is informed, that en-

tire brigades of infantry have been destroyed; that, by all accounts, the enemy has lost ten thousand men; and adds, in positive terms, that generals Lapisse and Morlot are killed, and that generals Sebastiani and Boulet are wounded. Now, it does appear very strange to me, that he should be able to speak so much in detail upon these matters, while he was unable, or, if not unable, unwilling, to give us any account at all of either the rank or number of prisoners whom he had taken from the enemy.—I also greatly dislike the word *missing*, as used in this dispatch, unless it had been accompanied with some explanation as to what was become of the persons missing. If, indeed, our army had been obliged to flee, after, or during the battle, then men might become missing from various accidents; or, they might desert, and so become missing. But in the present instance, Sir Arthur Wellesley kept possession of the field of battle; and, therefore, had it completely in his power to verify how many of the enemy he killed; while it was impossible that any of his people could be *lost*, except from *death* or *desertion*; that is to say, unless they were taken *prisoners*. It appears to me, therefore, that, under such circumstances, it is rather unjust to the parties missing, not to accompany the statement with a proper explanation. Amongst the missing, there are five *captains*, three *lieutenants*, and one *cornet*; and, ought it not to be stated, that these gentlemen are, in all probability, prisoners with the enemy? The word *missing*, thus used without any explanation, seems to convey an idea, that the Commander does not know what is become of the persons so described; which is hardly fair, especially when we consider, that the persons thus missing, have, in all likelihood, become prisoners from their having been more adventurous, that is to say, more brave than the generality of the army.—The French, as it was very easy to foresee they would, give us the *superiority of numbers*. They assert indeed, that we had triple their numbers. This I do not believe; but, we must allow either that we had *double* their numbers, or that the accounts published in England, previous to the news of the battle, respecting the force of Cuesta and of Sir Arthur Wellesley, were shamefully false.—Be this as it may, the world will never be persuaded, that the united force of the Spaniards and the English was not superior to that of the French. This is

what the world will never believe, though we were to fire the Park and Tower guns till there was not a single cartridge left in the kingdom. And, though I am fully persuaded, and the public is fully persuaded, that the whole of the hostility of the French was directed against the English in this battle; yet, we must allow, either that the Spaniards ought to be considered as part of the force opposed to the French that day, or that there is no reliance to be placed upon the Spaniards; and, of course, that we are fighting in a cause, as we often have been before, in which no one but ourselves feels any interest. To one of these propositions we must assent, and I much question, whether Buonaparté cares a straw which of them we chuse.—Respecting an event of so doubtful a nature in itself, and the consequences of which were far from being promising, our government might surely have been less hasty to speak in a tone of exultation. There is nothing more injurious to any cause than premature boasting. Would it not have been as well to suspend the firing of guns and the making of illuminations, until we could have ascertained what had become of the 653 officers and men of our army, who were missing, and until we had received an account of the rank and number of those whom we had made prisoners?—Nevertheless, the hireling prints inform us, that Sir Arthur Wellesley is, on account of this *victory*, to be made a peer! I wonder what the Spaniards, what the French, what all other nations will say, if this should be the case?—As to the consequences of this battle, I am of opinion that they cannot be favourable even to the further operations of our army, which, as far as one can judge from information so very imperfect as that which we have recently received from Spain and Portugal, appears to be in a very ticklish situation; and, as to the general cause of Spanish independence, what do we want more to convince us of the state in which that is, than this one plain, undenied, and undeniable fact, that, for nine months past, about one *tenth part* of the French army has been stationed in the peninsula, and that the “*universal Spanish nation*,” united with the universal Portuguese nation, and both assisted by a British army commanded by an officer, who, the Morning Chronicle says, is “*entitled to rank in the first order of British heroes*,” and, even unto this day, the

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said tenth part of the French army remains in the heart of Spain, and even in the capital of that kingdom? What more do we want to convince us that the cause of Spanish independence is not in a state to warrant any of those expectations which the editors of the hireling prints would have us entertain? In the eyes of these wretches, it is not only to be ignorant; it is to be criminal, to doubt of the truth of any of those assertions, respecting the fair prospects in Spain, which assertions have, in the end, invariably proved to be false. With them, not to believe every exaggerated statement, either in our own favour or against our enemy, is to be the friend of that enemy; for any one to anticipate disaster is to wish it, and to doubt the existence of success is to mourn its reality. The wretches, who conduct these prints, seem to sigh for nothing so much as for grounds of accusation against a part of the people; and, when they communicate to their readers an account of any success on the part of our army, our fleet, or on the part of our allies, they are sure not to forget to mention, amongst its consequences, *the mortification of the factious at home*, which epithet, *factious*, they apply to every man, who wishes for a reform of any abuse, or the reduction of any public expence. Now, this class of persons is very numerous; it is notoriously very numerous; and, if these publications have any sense in them, it is this, that a very considerable part of the people of England are mortified, when they hear of the reverses of Napoleon, and pleased when they hear of his success. That this is abominably false we know; but, if it were possible so to change the people as to make it true, those who write in the afore-mentioned prints would certainly produce that change. The *insolence*, which they never fail to discover, when they communicate any thing which has a tendency to create a belief that Napoleon will finally be overthrown; the *insolence*, which, *upon such occasions*, they discover; the intolerance; the persecuting doctrines they preach; all these are calculated to produce the worst possible effect; to imbitter the minds of the people; to implant in their hearts a feeling of resentment too deeply rooted to be removed even by common calamity; and, indeed, to make them think nothing of any calamity, when compared with the ground of that resentment. And these, too, are the wretches, who, when the ague-fit is on them, talk of

unanimity; as if a nation were to be rendered unanimous by representing five sixths of them as traitors in their hearts!

—I know, that the answer of these vipers is, that those, whom they so represent, are "*a mere handful of jacobins*." Are they, then, jacobins? And, was it a *handful* that was seen, the other day, assembled in the City of London and in Middlesex? Was this a "*handful*?" Insolent and empty wretches, was this a *handful*?—I do hope, however, that these infamous endeavours to divide the people will be attended with no consequence other than that of the disgrace of those who make use of them; and, that, in our resentments, no one will be so unjust, or so foolish, as to confound the cause of these wretches with the cause of his country.—For my own part, I am resolved, that nothing shall induce me to suppress my opinions of any actual event of the war, or of any event that I anticipate; and I am also resolved, that, in speaking of the actions and character of Napoleon, I will take no liberties that I am not allowed to take with any persons in this country; and, indeed, how dare I, seeing that, if peace were to come, I might be prosecuted for such liberties, though taken many years before. There is, perhaps, no state in which you can possibly exist so humiliating to you as that, which freely permits you to assault a person for certain alledged offences to-day, and which punishes you for the same assault to-morrow, a change having taken place in nothing but in the connection between the person assaulted and your rulers. It is precisely the life of a dog, let loose to-day upon him, for only barking at whom the poor cur would have been whipped but yesterday. This dog's life I will not live. I will say nothing of Buonaparté in time of war that I dare not repeat in time of peace; but, if I live to see that time, I will not fail to remind the hirelings of what they now are saying of him. I can remember when these same hirelings found him full of all manner of good qualities; aye, and I can remember, when they abused Spain for hesitating to give up to us a part of her territories, which Buonaparté, without the consent of Spain, had given to us. I can remember when these hirelings abused Spain for this; and, yet, they now abuse Buonaparté, because he is interfering in the affairs of Spain! We complain of the MONITEUR; we affect to believe nothing that it says; but there is nothing in the Moniteur a millionth part

so base as is the conduct of *our* hireling prints. The *Moniteur*, notwithstanding what it might have done, has really done nothing worth speaking of in the way of exposure of certain acts and persons in this country. It has passed all over in silence, or in saying but very little indeed. This is, too, no weak proof of the security which Napoleon feels himself to possess in the hearts of his people. He does not stand in need of any attacks upon other rulers. He is not afraid, that his people will sigh for any change; or, at least, he is so confident of his power over them, as to be under none of those apprehensions, with which our hirelings choose to represent him as being continually haunted.

THE EXPEDITION (for that is the name it is known by) has, at last, taken *Flushing*, and made its garrison prisoners of war. —As its further movements must so very soon be known, it would be useless to offer thereon any conjectures; but, one may venture to assert, without waiting for any farther particulars, that, if *more*, and a great deal more, be not done, this Armada will be the laughing stock of the world. —The dispatches, giving an account of what has hitherto been done, are *very long* and *very insipid*. More than two thirds of the matter consists of *praises* and *compliments*, without it being possible for any one to discover an adequate cause. Why, what has been *done*? What is it that all this talk is about? What *occasions* have there been for drawing forth all this wonderful stock of merit? In the taking of a place like Flushing, with such an immense force, except by *storm*, it appears next to impossible that there can be any ground for the bestowing of high praise on many persons. To the Engineer, who constructed the batteries, and to a small number of persons engaged in resisting the sallies, some particular mention may be due; but, we have here as long a list of praises as might have been expected after a battle like that of Blenheim, and, indeed, a much longer list than did actually accompany the account of that battle. The naval dispatches, upon this occasion, are of the same character. “Much a-do about nothing.” *Every* body who is named, is praised. The thing, by being so common, becomes little worth. It is like the firing of the Park and Tower Guns, and the illuminations at Whitehall and the Gaming-Houses. Surely, it is no such great thing for any of our admirals or captains to perform this or that branch

of service with ability and zeal? To swell out dispatches with praises in such a strain is not calculated to add to the reputation of the navy, whose officers never, except upon occasions where their merit appears in a very conspicuous light, ought to be the object of particular praise; because to praise them for trifles is to check, instead of encouraging emulation. In such a service a man ought to feel that to be *any thing* at all, he must be *greatly* meritorious; but, according to the new system, there are degrees of praise to suit all sizes of zeal, talents, and courage; so that if a man has but *moderation* in his views of fame, he need never despair of being satisfied. But, the worst of it is, this moderation is not at all calculated to produce that sort of deeds, which support the reputation of the service and the renown of the country, and which, by those means, tend to the preservation of the country's independence. —There is some talk of an intention to keep *possession* of the island of Walcheren, and to retain it at the peace. When we speak of *peace* it is like speaking of posterity; but, whether in war or in peace, I cannot think it possible long to hold this island. The garrison must be very numerous; the *provisions* must be sent from England; the *fuel* to cook them must be sent from England; and, I think it not unlikely, that no small part of the *water*, for certain purposes, at least, must be sent from England. The permanent possession of the island would, therefore, be attended with an enormous expence, and that, too, without a probability, as far as I can see, of producing any proportionate good effect. It would, perhaps, prevent the port of Antwerp from sending forth ships of war against us; but Napoleon has so many other ports, that this would be no great injury to him, and could not much retard his naval projects, unless, indeed, we were able to block up closely all his other ports. All that he wants to do, at present, is to *build ships* and get them *fit for sea*. He may build a fleet of a hundred sail of the line in the Scheldt, in spite of our possession of Walcheren, or of the whole of Zeeland. The hemp grows in abundance in the North of France and in the whole of Belgium. Oak and other timber, of all sorts, is to be had in plenty upon the banks of the Scheldt, as well as upon those of the Meuse and the Rhine. The countries which these rivers run through are covered with forests of hard wood; and, from the mountains of the

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Vosges and of the Schwartzwald, the foot of which is washed by the Rhine, there are pines as good, perhaps, as any in Norway. Hence will come the pitch and tar also; and, in short, without receiving a single article by sea, Buonaparté may build in the Scheldt, and at a comparatively trifling expence, a number of ships of war equal to that of the English fleet. Indeed, the fact of his having actually built *thirteen ships of the line*, in the port of Antwerp, while we most firmly believed, that he had not the means of building a ship of the line any where, and while our immense naval force was employed in blockading his ports, and cutting off his commercial communications; this fact alone ought to be sufficient to convince us, that the naval resources of the Scheldt are very great.—The possession, therefore, of Walcheren by us will not prevent Napoleon from building ships, from building a navy, in the Scheldt; and, unless we could be certain of being able to *keep* the island, the possession can be only of temporary use; for, the moment we give it up, or are driven from it, that moment out comes a French fleet.—Some say, that Walcheren is accessible by means of the ice. If so, it cannot be tenable against a power like that of Buonaparté. But, this point ought to have been *ascertained*, before any expensive attempt had been made upon it; for, if it be accessible by means of the ice, it may probably be in the hands of the enemy before next Christmas, and that, too, with great loss on our part. In short, if the possession of it be at all dependant upon the frost, it would be greatly criminal in any minister to leave a garrison in it at any time later than the month of November.

—I dare say, that the public in general have been much surprized to find, that there were thirteen new ships of the line in the Scheldt, not dreaming that there were so many in all Napoleon's dominions, and not having, three times in their lives, heard the *port* of Antwerp mentioned. There are not a few other things existing, of which the people of England hear nothing; but, of which they *will* hear by-and-by.—At the peace of Amiens, I, assisted by a gentleman who was more conversant in the affairs of the continent, foretold what this port of Antwerp would become, if left in the hands of the French. The prediction was treated as a dream; but, it has been realized; the “dream is out,” as the old women

say; and, a most fearful dream it is. It does, in short, with other circumstances, render it next to impossible, that the battle for the independence of England should not be *finally fought upon English ground*. To this, after all our endeavours to avoid it; after all our attempts to disguise the fact even from ourselves, it is evident that we must come at last. In this view of the war, every proof of the valour of our army is greatly valuable to us; and, as far as the army has had opportunities of shewing its excellence, it has, I believe, shewn it upon this occasion.

LORD GAMBIER.—The news-papers state, that “the enemy’s fleets and squadrons this side of Gibraltar, *being either destroyed or rendered useless*, LORD GAMBIER “and Sir John Thomas DUCKWORTH have “arrived in town; their ships not being “now kept in an efficient state for sea, their “crews have been put into smaller vessels.” So! So! What, then, the enemies’ fleets were all destroyed in *Basque Roads*, I suppose? I have heard of no destruction of his fleets since the destruction caused by LORD COCHRANE and his gallant crew.—The view, with which the above quoted paragraph has been published, is plain enough. There is scarcely any one so dull-eyed as not to see the bottom of. But, it will not, and must not, succeed.—The COURT-MARTIAL at Portsmouth must not be passed over in that silence, in which some persons are so anxious to see it buried. The *Evidence* there given (that most curious Evidence!) requires to be laid before the public in a shape more clear and less expensive and cumbrous than it now is. This task I shall endeavour to perform in the course of two or three Numbers.

AUSTRIA.—The public cannot but have observed the high-flown praises, which the hireling prints have constantly bestowed upon the ARCHDUKE CHARLES, as often as the Austrians have been at war with France. These very prints, the SUN, the COURIER, the MORNING POST, and others, are now attacking this same Archduke, with the utmost virulence of language. Upon this subject the STATESMAN news-paper asks: “Are the people of “England prepared to acquiesce in that “degradation—that destruction of character, “which is now manifestly meditated against “this illustrious Commander, on whose “individual talents and exertions we were, “but a few short weeks ago, taught to believe the fate of Europe rested?” Why,

no: I do not believe, that the *people* of England are prepared for this; but, if the Archduke Charles advises peace with France; if he prefers saving a remnant of power for his family, rather than expose the last stake to certain destruction for the sake of favouring the views of the ministers of England, we may be sure, that there are some persons, who are prepared for this, and, if within their power, for a great deal more.—Oh! monstrous! To accuse this Archduke of folly, of imbecility, and almost of treason, when, only a few weeks ago, he was almost a God in their eyes, and when it cannot be forgotten, that he was a subject of praise even in the last *Speech from the throne*! “By presuming,” says the Morning Chronicle, “that he desires peace with France, sufficient is known for the principle which regulates the praise or censure of these sagacious politicians. They take it for granted that *all foreigners ought to join with us in supporting our interests*, and to consider the interests of their own countries only as *secondary objects*. He who is *for us* has a title to their unqualified praise; but the moment any one ceases to act as *we would have him*, be the cause what it may—good or bad—no matter, he must be an object of unqualified abuse.”—This is very true. It has been their invariable practice. Every foreign prince, or individual, no matter what his rank or character, becomes an object of abuse the moment his conduct is such as these hirelings deem hostile to *our* interests. They really seem to think, that all the world is made to be subservient to our interests, or imaginary interests; or rather, to the politics of the English ministry.—Why, have not the Austrians ventured enough? What would we have more of them? What would we have the Archduke or any other man do with such an army as he has described in his Orders, issued after the battle of Wagram? An army that he accuses of every species of unsoldierlike and cowardly conduct?—Yet, the hireling prints, are now endeavouring to persuade the public, that this same army is capable of effecting the “*deliverance of Europe*.” Was ever infatuation equal to that which can induce a people to listen to such gross attempts at deception!—That these hirelings speak from any *authority*, upon this occasion, is scarcely credible; and yet, what should have given them their cue? What

should have made them, all at once, open, full cry, upon the poor Archduke? They must have had something like certain information, that he is *in favour of peace with Napoleon*. That, we may be assured, they firmly *believe*, at any rate; and, in all probability, the fact is so.

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.—Below, the reader will find a Letter from Mr. WORTHINGTON to Major CARTWRIGHT, in reply to Lord SELKIRK's Letter to the Major. His lordship is here completely answered as far as relates to *France*; and, as to *America*, besides what Mr. Worthington has said respecting *universal suffrage*, what analogy is there in the two cases? Lord Selkirk might as well have cited the government of the Indians or the Negroes. Have they any *King in America*? Have they any *House of Lords*? In short, what similarity is there in the state of the two countries? In America the Governors and President are elective; and, as *Judges* may become Governors, *they act upon the bench* with a view to their future elections; they canvass in their *charges, judgments, and decisions*. This is truly abominable. It is the very worst system of tyranny. But, *what has this to do with us and our question of Parliamentary Reform*, my Lord Selkirk? Have we any Governors and Presidents? Can our Judges or Chancellors ever become our chief magistrates?—I shall continue this subject in my next.

MR. TOWNSEND's Letter, in explanation of what was said at the Middlesex Meeting about *tythes*, as connected with *Parliamentary Reform*, shall appear in the next Register. It should have been inserted in the present; but I am sure that when Mr. Townsend has read the Letter of Mr. Worthington, he would be very sorry if any part of it had been left out.

W^M. COBBETT.

Botley, Thursday, 24th August 1809.

A LETTER TO

JOHN CARTWRIGHT, ESQ.

In Reply to the Earl of Selkirk's Letter to him, on the subject of Parliamentary Reform.

DEAR SIR,—A venerable and excellent friend of yours, my neighbour, here, has just put into my hands the Earl of Selkirk's Letter to you, containing his own account of his reasons for declining to act as a

Steward, at the late Meeting for Promotion of Parliamentary Reform; from whose well-merited celebrity my expectation I own, was highly excited.—I was very anxious to know what more could be said on the other side; I therefore looked from the pen of Lord S. for a novel exhibition, either of powerful argument, which might stagger, if not convince; or for a defence in some theory at all events ingenious, if not firm and sound, for the universally acknowledged corruptions. In short if, owing to Lord S.'s unfortunate side of the question, I should be disappointed of a solid joint, I yet expected the savoury remains of the late Edinburgh Reviewers, served up again with superior skill in a high seasoned curry or haggies, exquisite at least, if not digestible. In both these respects my expectation has been baulked; and I have got up hungry and disappointed—yet not dissatisfied.—There is one point, however, at starting, in which I claim a full concurrence with the noble writer—Where, stating his defection from himself, as well as from his deceased father and brother, he offers in their names the just tribute of respect to your character. Those names are venerable; that of his brother especially is dear not only to those who knew his candid nature, but for his enlarged and philanthropic spirit is dear to his country, and would have been equally dear, if he could have been equally known, to the universal world. I will add, that in the entertainment of the great question now before us, the best part of the public will with me regret, that their heir as well as successor in talent, should, in expatiating upon their political opinions, have expunged with his own hand this quarter from the shield of his descent.—I must begin with a rapid synopsis of the Letter. Lord Selkirk accounts for this his change of opinion, both from his family and from himself, on the ground of the opportunity (page 6) which he had, but “which they never had, of seeing the practical application of those principles, from which they expected consequences so beneficial.”—He then instances America as the scene of this application (pages 6 & 7) but expressly declines on the score of their length, (page 8) to go into the reasonings, which have occurred to him, “as to the source of the fallacy,” (now indeed pretty prevalent, if it is one, in England) that a Parliamentary Reform would “have the effects, which its most sincere and zealous friends anticipate.” Alas!

these “reasonings,” long, or short, are the very things we wanted! He then proceeds (pages 9 & 10) to the common places of corrections endangering benefits, of our enviable mass of public happiness, &c. &c. till he ends at the end of page 9 in the (as himself allows) “hacknied topic” of the French Revolution;—which continues to page 14, where “the necessary tendency” of elections purely democratical” are ably pointed out. Then (page 15) come the Edinburgh Reviewers, or “commendable representation by family influence,” &c.—until page 16, where the noble writer returns to his favourite topic, America, again, and to “Peter Porcupine,” (pages 18 and 19) wherein it is contended, when we translate the passages into plain English, that it is more important to remove abuses, than their causes; followed by an apostrophe or avowal on the part of Lord S. himself, which, as the opponent of so honest and popular a measure as Parliamentary Reform, he seems to have thought necessary, and to which the reader will of course give credit, “that he is the decided friend” of every just measure of æconomical “reform.” Pages 20, 21, & finis, contain an appeal to the friends of Reform, deprecating their efforts, by a suggestion, that this bustle about Parliamentary Reform will defeat all other salutary reforms.—Yet are we convinced (probably by our malevolence) that it is the apprehension excited in the minds of the government by this question, or bustle, solely, which has put the ministry upon the *qui vive*, on the subject of any sort of Reform whatsoever!—Having taken this rapid view of the grounds on which Lord S. has chosen to rest the argument, and which certainly are neither new, nor striking, I proceed to follow him upon those grounds, which, after all, afford but a mere argument of analogy, leaving the principle, as I trust to shew, intirely undecided and even untouched. I regret that a man of Lord S.'s abilities should have *blinked* the principle; I would far more willingly have met him in the noble field of general argument. For I want to know from a man of his capacity, what connection there is between Rotten Boroughs and any of the valuable privileges (yet extant) of Englishmen. A case in point just occurs. I am writing this, not in my own house, but in the Isle of Wight; now I long to know from Lord S. by any induction, however ingenious, in what way the protection of the Liberty of the Subject, the purity of the distribution

of justice in this Island, or the security in which every man in it may enjoy the fruit of his industry (pages 9 & 10) are or possibly can be, in any the remotest way, indebted to, or promoted by a *reverend* gentleman (these *Sacred Politicians* jostle us every where!) returning 4 members of parliament for two boroughs just under my nose; while another borough has its members returned by two persons, the whole Island being, in fact, represented by three persons.—I wish a reason why the properties and rights, personal and judicial, of the inhabitants of this Island, would not be as well preserved by permitting the substantial inhabitants themselves in this Island to chuse the guardians, whom they might think the fittest to preserve them, as they are likely to be preserved by allowing one person to have the nomination of four of these guardians, and two other individuals, in like manner, the nomination of the remaining two. And again, if it shall further appear that these guardians of the whole, so nominated by individuals, shall exercise a right of taxing the properties of the whole of the inhabitants, and shall, all or any of them, (I mean these guardians) receive out of the produce of such taxes, money in any shape, offices, or honours, for themselves or families, wherewith to indemnify themselves for the sums which they may have paid to those individuals (the creators of our guardians!) for their nomination, I shall be glad to be informed, how, in such a predicament as this, the right of nominating such guardians can be lodged so, or more, dangerously than in the hands of such individuals, that is, in other words, in close or rotten boroughs; or how worse guardians for their properties, &c. could, under any imaginary system of appointment, be appointed. Until those can be answered, I shall esteem every conclusion drawn, analogically, from America, France, or elsewhere to be puerile and inconsequent, even did such analogies as Lord S. assumes, really exist. Which I now proceed to attempt to shew have no existence whatever, but in his lordship's imagination and assumption.—First, then, to America; and herein I have, in common with other gentlemen, to complain of a serious misrepresentation of our avowed principles. Lord S. has imputed by implication to the Stewards of the Meeting in promotion of Parliamentary Reform an object, not only which they never had, but which they distinctly and unanimous-

ly disavowed; I mean *universal Suffrage*.—I will very readily agree with Lord S. (page 6) that universal suffrage and frequency of election may prove no bar to the misconduct of representatives, that a political adventurer, raised to power by popular favour, is fully as likely to abuse that power, as is the purchaser of a rotten borough.—In short, I will go much farther than Lord S. for I will assert that political adventurers raised to power by any means whatsoever are the great bane of our government. I further contend and insist, that rotten boroughs are the nurses and cradles of these adventurers; and it is expressly to extinguish such adventurers, that we wish to extend the rights of suffrage to solid Householders and Tax-payers, and allow no others to manufacture Members of Parliament, as journeymen do pins and buttons, for their private emolument! Granting then, that the American government, founded (as Lord S. says it is) on universal suffrage, to be as bad as Peter Porcupine shews, or Lord S. for the sake of his argument can wish it to be, still, as universal suffrage is absolutely exploded by the Reformists in England, who met at the Crown and Anchor, and the two cases consequently without analogy, I must contend, in opposition to the noble author, that the practical results of the government of America, founded on universal suffrage, do not furnish any conclusion which could properly have caused a change in the opinions of the late Lords Selkirk and Daer, had they been now living, as to the actual tendency of a Reform of the House of Commons in England; a Reform which is to be principally accomplished by cutting off the close franchises and rotten boroughs, and extending the rights of suffrage, of which, in every instance whatever, property is proposed to be the basis and qualification. I need say nothing as to the proposed shortening of the duration of Parliament, as such proposition is not only strictly constitutional, but is conformable to the actual practice of the best periods of our government; it is moreover absolutely impotent to any mischief and alone potent to good. For if the conduct of the representative is what it ought to be, his constituents can, and of course will re-elect him, and if it is *not* what it ought to be, why, then, the shorter the period allowed him to misbehave himself the better.—Having shewn then, as I conceive, that Lord S.'s argument can derive no benefit whatever from his instance of Ame-

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rica, I proceed to his next instance of France in 1789, reserving to myself, if I still have room, a few remarks (in concluding) on the subject of America, which has been dragged forward, so irrelevantly as I conceive, into this discussion.—Now, with respect to France, the analogy is still more unfortunate, I mean that Lord S.'s objection to the conduct of the then French Patriots is still more unreasonable and inapplicable than is his instance from America.—To show which, it will be necessary, whilst considering the historical fact which Lord S. has cited, to refer to two or three authentic contemporary as well as former facts, which Lord S. has not cited, and which certainly would not at all have suited the noble author's argument.—Before entering into this discussion respecting Revolutionary France, I must beg to premise, that it is a topic, which of all others I would have deprecated, as I thoroughly and seriously do its results. It has nothing in it in common with the situation of England, which can identify the tendency of any of the acts of the two nations, and it necessarily leads into digression at least useless, if not acrimonious.—To the point; "The king of France in 1789 did," I will grant as Lord S. assumes, "offer the important concession That no taxes should for the future be levied without the authority of the States General, *under the condition that it should be constituted according to its ancient form in three Chambers;*" but did the king distinctly offer that the dissent of the Tiers Etat should disable the acts or votes of the other two orders *under his controul*, in case they should vote taxes to which the Tiers Etat would not assent? In a word, was it's assent made the essence of taxation, as in England, where Money Bills not only *originate* with the Commons, but are never allowed to be in any the slightest respect altered elsewhere?—And even if the King (Louis XVI) had promised this, who was to compel the Court, or his Ministry, by whom he was governed, to fulfil the promise? Or if he had fulfilled it himself, and in his own government, who was to compel his successor, who had made no such promise to imitate his fidelity? Was there in France any extant volume containing the asserted Rights of the Subject, with the example of one monarch capitally punished, and another deposed and driven out of the country by popular indignation for violation of such Rights?—In short, was there any Code of Rights

then extant in France, dear to the people by inheritance, and familiar to them by inalienable and imprescriptible enjoyment, which the Government, backed by a mercenary army, would not thereafter have dared to attack? and this, not only without any prospect of probable success; but with the certainty of calling the whole nation upon its legs into the field against them in defence of its notorious privileges? Was there no Bastille in France, no Lettres de Cachet? Even granting that the substantive assent of the Tiers Etat to the levy of taxes could have been indefeasibly secured to that order (which is a very liberal concession on my part) can Lord S. shew that the Freedom of the Election of its members would never have been violated? Has Lord S. forgotten that a King was driven from the British throne "for having violated the Freedom of Election of Members to serve in Parliament; for divers arbitrary and illegal courses; for having caused to be returned of late years partial, corrupt, and unqualified persons to serve on Juries on Trials, and particularly divers Jurors on Trials for High Treason, who were not Freeholders; for having required excessive Bail of persons committed in criminal cases to elude the benefit of laws made for the Liberty of the Subjects; and for having imposed excessive Fines, and illegal and cruel Punishments, &c. &c.?" Has Lord S. forgot that this is the declaratory part of the Bill of Rights of Englishmen? and does the noble author in principle deny these Rights? Does he think that a Frenchman, by the Being who created Man, was not invested with the same Rights as an Englishman? Does he contend, that an hereditary despotism can on that account prescribe against the imprescriptible rights of mankind? Had the French nation then, I repeat, any guarantee in any of its actual circumstances, that the Freedom of Elections would not have been violated? Had they a constitutional security against any arbitrary and illegal courses? Had they any Juries whatsoever, Freeholders or others, in State Trials? Was not the administration of justice as partial, corrupt, and dependant as it pleased, and who could make it otherwise, or call it to account? and with respect to excessive Bail, Fines; and illegal and cruel Punishments, were they not inflicted at the arbitrary will of every ministry? Perhaps Lord S. may be of opinion, that this is the way, in which,

the mass of mankind ought to be governed; and that, except as to the contribution of their money, (a matter much regarded in Scotland) they have no other rights! The noble lord in fine must either admit this to be his opinion and political principle, or he must abandon his argument. For, if the French nation had any right to something more than a mere vote as to taxation, they ought not to have been satisfied with that offer of the King, which Lord S. argues ought to have satisfied them. Leaving, then, his lordship to take his election between the abandonment of his argument, or of those principles, detestable to an English ear, which he must maintain, if he does not abandon his argument, I will now cite to the reader a few of the acts of the French Government, contemporary with the offer of Lewis the xvth, to abandon the levy of taxes without consent of the States General; by which he may judge of the spirit of that Government, and of the probable value to the nation of that Right which in words was so offered to be conceded. When M. Calonne assembled the Notables, although they were all nominated by the king, it was determined to have them still more humbly devoted to the views of the Government, than even such a nomination, if at all respectable in the eyes of the country, would have made them. Calonne therefore, by a stratagem, that of dividing the whole body into seven Committees of 20 Members each, and in making the decision, to depend upon a *majority of Committees*, contrived that a majority of four of the Committees, being only 44 persons, should be a majority of 140 persons, which was the number of the Notables, and this number he reasonably assumed, either by consulting his own experience, or possibly by information from England, might be always obtained in any assembly in favour of a court. But, although an able financier, Calonne miscalculated; and this body, even so constituted, would not impose any taxes; (a matter scarcely to be believed in England!) concurring in the opinion that it had not authority. It however recommended two new taxes to be enregistered by the Parliament, a Stamp and a Land Tax. On the Parliament replying, in words which should be written in gold, "that with such a revenue as the nation then supported, the name of Taxes ought not to be mentioned unless for the purpose of reducing them," what was the answer of that Court, which was so benignly about to offer to the peo-

ple of France, what Lord S. commends, and thinks they ought to have accepted; the right of imposing their own Taxes? Why, the answer was, a compulsory enregistering of the Taxes in question! and when the Parliament struck this out at their next free meeting, all the members were served with *lettres de cachet* (a practice which M. Fayette observes a majority of the Nobles at the Séance of the Notables appeared in favour of) and exiled to Trois.—Continuing there inflexible, it was soon after recalled to Paris, when, in some further contests, which arose with the Court, the Parliament at last declared, that the Right of enregistering Edicts for Taxes belonged only to the States General, and therefore they would no longer continue even to debate upon it. It was very soon after this that the King came to Paris, and held a personal meeting of eight hours with the Parliament, in which he promised them, in a manner that appeared to proceed personally from himself, that the States General should be convened; which is the origin of the offer, to which Lord S. has referred. What however was the result of this? Why, his ministers discovering that in his promise of convening the States General the King had mentioned no time, they contrived an expedient calculated to elude the promise, without appearing to break it. For this purpose a factitious sort of new Constitution was constructed, called a *Cour Pleniére*, "in which were invested all the powers that government might want, and in which the contended Right of Taxation was to be given up by the King to the members, whom he himself appointed; a new Criminal Code, &c., was substituted, and in many points, the whole certainly exhibited a melioration of the principles of the Government; still the *Cour Pleniére* itself was no more than a medium through which despotism was to pass, without appearing to act directly from itself."—The Parliament refused to enregister the Edict for establishing this *Cour Pleniére*, and it was generally contended, "that the right of altering the Government was a national right, and not a right of the Government itself, which might otherwise be perpetually innovating; and finally, that the *Cour Pleniére* was nothing more than a larger Cabinet." The ministry brought this to issue by sending a regiment of soldiers to surround the Parliament house; and, on the members sending for beds and

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provisions the commanding officer was ordered to enter, and seize, (which he did) the principal members, and shut them up in different prisons! This was the Parliament of Paris. A deputation at the same time arrived from the province of Brittany, to remonstrate against the establishment of the Cour Pleniére; and these the King, or his ministers, sent to the Bastille! The spirit of the nation however was not to be then overcome: the Cour Pleniére was obliged to be given up, and the Ministers followed its fate. M. Neckar was recalled to office, and the convening of the States General was no longer resisted. They did not meet till May 1789, which is about the period of Lord S.'s assumption of the King's offer. The States General had not been convened since the year 1614, when they had deliberated in their distinct orders; and, as Lord S. has laid a stress "on the King's important concession, that no Taxes should for the future be levied without the authority constituted according to its ancient form in 3 chambers," and follows this up by assuming, that, had it been accepted, it would have corrected all the despotism and vices of the government, I will just cite the words of an eminent French author, who wrote before any Revolution was dreamed of in France, and who, speaking of the States General of 1614, says, "They held the public in suspense 5 months, and by the questions agitated therein, and the heat with which they were put, it appears that the Great (les Grands,) thought more to satisfy their particular passions than to procure the good of the nation," (one would think it was an assembly of our own times!) "and the whole time passed away in altercations, ceremonies, and parade."

—They were consequently never called again. To the reader of these pages it is then left to determine, whether such an assembly, of tried inutility, even before the corruptions had taken root, in its anciently constituted state of three distinct chambers, where two of these chambers representing the privileged orders, and emanating from the Crown, had either each a negative upon every measure for the People, or by combining could have kept the Tiers Etat, or universal nation, in a perpetual minority, would have supplied the wants of the then French nation, where all these corruptions had thriven to a gigantic maturity? A nation groaning under every description of abuse, the com-

bined results of a systematised monarchical, ecclesiastical, feudal, aristocratical and municipal Tyranny! In what way was a constitution of equal rights, such as we theoretically enjoy in England, to have been established by the States General, in fact by the Tiers Etat, when the Clergy and the Noblesse arrogated for themselves a pretty general exemption from burthens, with a maintenance of privileges which rendered every man a slave, who was not of that class. How were these rights to have been constitutionally secured which Lord S. says we enjoy so exclusively now in England? How was the fruit of the industry of the people to have been protected, under a system of unequal taxation and feudal oppression, or who would have made it equal? How was the purity of the distribution of justice to have been guarded, where the Judge was the Jury, and where the right to administer justice was bought and sold? And how was personal liberty to have been enjoyed under the *regime* of Lettres de Cachet and the BASTILLE! In a word, how were these incompatibilities with any Constitution of Liberty to have been won, or wrested for the Tiers Etat from the Crown, which had the key of the Bastille, or from the privileged orders, which deliberating in their separate chambers had their respective negatives upon every measure of general equalization and of national utility? But, if Lord S. or any reader can yet have a doubt upon the importance of the Tiers Etat not having yielded in that respect, and of the complete restoration of the old regime, which would have followed it, let him look at two more facts, which are absolutely decisive of this question. The one, the stand, that the Court and Aristocracy made, when, unable to obtain the absolute separation of the three Chambers, the King in a bed of justice accorded the deliberation and vote *par tête* upon several objects; but specially reserved the deliberation and vote upon all questions respecting a Constitution to the three Chambers separately.—The other, that when the Court could not accomplish this, it drew 30,000 foreign troops under Broglie round Paris; and shut up, and guarded, by troops, the doors of the National Assembly at Versailles, which produced the memorable meeting at the Tennis Ground, the Oath never to separate, &c. the capture of the Bastille, and the whole explosion of the Revolution.—Contemplating the matter,

then, with the light of these historical facts, I cannot agree with Lord S. that the verbal concession of the Right of Taxation by the King to the *Etats Generaux* could ever have produced for France those happy consequences which he foresees. Nor can I conceive it possible in a nation, whose abuses were interwoven with its very social existence, and which had not the guide of a single land-mark of liberty, how a Constitution, without a Civil War, could ever have been established by three deliberative Chambers, each operating with a negative, and each claiming privileges absolutely irreconcilable with the privileges of the other; nay, further, privileges, which in the nature of things could not have a concurrent existence; where the very enjoyment of those of the one must have been the extinction of those of the other. A Government is a very different thing from a Constitution; a Government may very well and very salutarily perform its functions through organs like our own, whose interests are distinct, and even opposed to each other; perhaps it is the best way in which civil government can perform its functions; but, in order to frame a Constitution, the interests must concur.—If then, I cannot with Lord S. see or admit any likelihood, that the happiness and freedom of a British Constitution would have followed the simple acceptance by the *Etats Generaux* of the King's concession respecting the Taxes, I can still less discern any of the steps in that *Echellon* of proof, or probability, by which it must be presumed that Lord S. arrived at his conclusion, how the restoring the practice of the English Constitution to its principles, which admit of no dispute, can have a tendency to produce any thing like the horrors of a French Revolution.—On the contrary, it appears, by every reference to the subject of France, that her Revolution was occasioned solely by the abuses of her government; and how the maintainance of the abuses, which have crept into our government, is to be the preservative for England against a Revolution, into which, if the example of France has any analogy at all, her abuses precipitated her, is to me utterly incomprehensible; or rather appears a conclusion drawn in direct contradiction to the clearest inferences of reason.—It would be preposterous, at this time of day, to set about drily to prove that the bad blood too frequently attendant on changes of government proceeds, not from

any thing inherent in the nature of these changes, but from the tenacity with which abuses and corruptions, when inveterate, are upheld by those who subsist upon them. If governments would remedy their corruptions in time, political changes would never be sanguinary. But, when they are of long duration, the very subsistence of a great mass of a nation becomes identified with their continuance; and who can expect such persons quietly to give up all they have? One of the strongest arguments, then, for immediate Reform of political corruptions, is the bloodshed which must necessarily be the consequence of their long course. It is in the name of mercy and humanity, therefore, and not in that of ferocity and cruelty, that I contend for an immediate Reform of our Parliament, and, through that, of our Government. The French Revolution, as it broke out, was the consequence of the most inveterately protracted system of bad government.—The Spanish bloodshed and desolation is solely ascribable to the same cause. Nothing but the most detestable tyranny in Spain could have suggested to Buonaparté the practicability of a change of Tyrants; and nothing but that has prevented the attempt from annihilating its projector.—In the foregoing, for the sake of meeting Lord S., I have gratuitously admitted his assumption, that the dreadful excesses committed by the French Revolutionists, and their resulting tyranny, which now threatens the civilized world, were the natural, and as it were inevitable, offspring of the political change or Reform of their Government; and that of course therefore a Reform in England, which might probably have similar consequences, is of all things to be deprecated. The historical fact is nevertheless in the very teeth of this assumption; and the interests of truth and of liberty, whilst the language of either dare yet be uttered in Europe, require it to be incontestibly stated by a spectator of these events on the stage where they were acted, that the enormities which sullied the very character of mankind, in the sequel of the Revolution of France, did not even derive the germ of their existence from the Reformation, however radical, which took place in the Government. The tenacity with which the privileged orders adhered to their usurpations, which were incompatible with any just Government, and the more than suspected insincerity of the Court, in its divesting itself of its despotic prerogatives, both which have been

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already shewn, together with some intemperance on the part of a few of the leaders of the Revolution, did unquestionably between them create a ferment, to which several lives fell an unavoidable sacrifice; and which in the event, had they been left to themselves, *might* have produced a Civil War, with its usual terrible consequences. This is the ultimate and (protract it as long as you will) the inevitable termination of bad government, and resisted melioration, either in France, or any other country; and this to a certain degree did, and to an indefinite degree might have happened in France. But, although the combinations of the few within the country against the interests of the many, might have produced a Civil War with conceivable consequences, they would have been quite inadequate to the production of the inconceivable, and blood-freezing horrors of the subsequent stages of the Revolution. These, like all other consequences, were nevertheless produced by co-extensive and adequate causes. They were produced by the combinations of all the trembling despotisms in Europe leagued against the cause of freedom and mankind. It was into this conspiracy that Mr. Burke and Mr. Pitt so fatally precipitated England, to the entailment of consequences which Lord S. so naturally regrets; to which all these Governments, except our own, have already fallen sacrifices, and of which no human wisdom and foresight can yet discover the end! To these regrets of the noble writer I heartily unite my own; and the more so, because, having been on the spot at the time, I know that no national sentiment was ever more sincerely or universally (I might say unanimously) felt and expressed, than that of a desire on the part of the French nation for lasting peace and amity with England; but regrets are unavailing, and the only good which we can derive out of this evil must result from reasoning justly upon its causes, in order that we may avert its consequences from ourselves.—It was not, then, the change in its Government, or political Revolution in France, as Lord S. assumes, but the ensuing Continental War, which produced, as it were, and solely raised to power the most atrocious of the revolutionary characters. The Girondists in part were patriots and philosophers; but the desperate crisis of the war and the country superseded those men, and called for characters, which, happily for mankind, peace

neither wants nor produces. There was then a demand for remorseless and violent energies, and the demand created its supply of this, as it does of every thing else. These men, however detestable their characters, and deplorable the actual consequences, did, in one respect, nevertheless, the work they were called for.—They extricated their country from the dangers that assailed it, and they defended it against the world; but in doing this, they eventually, and inevitably laid the foundation of that military predominance, which has fatally alike triumphed over their own liberties, and those of mankind. It is from this career of glory that the French nation derives some consolation for the free destinies it has lost; whilst the rest of Europe, which endeavoured to suppress them, can find no consolation.—Contrary, then, to the assumption of Lord S. I trust I have shewn, both that the horrors of the French Revolution were not even the natural, far less the necessary, consequences of mere political change or reform of government; but that they were the direct consequences of the imprudent combination of the governments of Europe against her liberties, and that that actual military scourge, also, whose successes Lord S. so feelingly deprecates, did not naturally arise out of the French Revolution, but was the offspring of the same ill-fated Conspiracy. In pointing out the atrocities committed during the Revolution, Lord S. has accidentally overlooked one little matter; an omission the more surprising as his lordship seems to have thought the national purse of so much consequence, as to have been anxious that the French should have foregone every security for public liberty in consideration of the check upon Taxation, which was offered by the King to the *Etats Généraux*. The little omission to which I allude, is that of the National Assembly having in its first year reduced nine millions sterling of the annual Taxes! somewhat, it is true by a sale of national domains, but more by retrenchment; and this upon a revenue and expenditure quite trifling, when compared with the sum of British Taxation. A final reflection here suggests itself to us upon this topic, which Lord S. had better not have introduced; and this is, that a government, after half a score of centuries' continuance, must have very ill answered the purposes of one, when its subjects either shewed so much hatred to it, or had been so little humanized by it, as to

make war upon it in a way which would disgrace the history of cannibals and savages! The Revolutions of France and of Spain, which I have touched upon, are examples of the *violent* Reforms, the natural and necessary results of abuses; I hope they are the last of the chapter! On the other hand, two or three changes of federal Government, as well as of provincial Constitutions, which have quietly taken place in America through the means of Conventions, assembled for that express purpose, exhibit bloodless and salutary examples of *timely* Reforms. I will merely allude to the most important, which assembled in Philadelphia in 1787, for the alteration of the Federal Constitution of America, where the Convention, having performed that business, having recommended its alterations to the consideration of the separate States, and having fixed the period, at which, if these alterations obtained their approbation, the new Constitution should begin to operate, the members peaceably dissolved the Meeting, dispersed, and went home. Thus was a National Reform quietly accomplished by the people, or nation, the Government not having been party, or actor in the whole transaction. I have merely cited the case as a proof (though I think it superfluous) that there is no necessary connection, as some suppose, between an amendment of political Constitution, and Civil War—far less between Reform and the horrors of a French Revolution; and that, when Civil Wars are produced by these occasions, it is the sinister interference of an Aristocracy, of a Court, or of some Cabal, with interests different from those of the Nation, which produces them. Mankind in fact, (for it is ridiculous to suppose otherwise) agree always in what is right and reasonable, on its being shewn to them when their selfish passions do not make them do otherwise; and never quarrel, and cut each others throats, in matters which regard their temporal concerns, unless where their interests clash.—I have now, I conceive, given a satisfactory answer to the specific points in Lord S.'s Pamphlet of Analogy; it remains but to take a look at his general conclusion and scope, which appears to me to be impartially this, viz. that because frightful excesses followed the train of the French Revolution, therefore a corrupt representation of the people is to be perpetuated in England! Now, had Lord S. without feeling himself called upon to give any

reasons for his change of opinion, merely said that his former opinion in this respect was changed, the public might have received such notification with the deference due to his lordship's talents and character; and would have naturally concluded that the noble author had solid reasons for the change. But when a man of his lordship's talents condescends to come before the public to assign the grounds of his change of opinion, and, in doing so, assigns no grounds which can warrant a change, the public will necessarily conceive that his lordship, in the hurry of composition, may have omitted the real motive of the change, which they would be peculiarly gratified at seeing supplied in a more copious edition. And this is the more necessary for his lordship to do, because, in the posture in which this agitated question now stands, the opponents of Parliamentary Reform have gained but the Name of the Earl of Selkirk appended to a pamphlet, which does not contain one trait of those qualities, which have deservedly made that name a favourite of the public. In the means then of which the government has so assiduously and inauspiciously availed itself for strengthening its own side in the contention about Reform, it has, as in a late proceeding in Parliament, contrived materially to corroborate the cause of its assailant, by exhibiting to a train of apologies, or reasonings, which can convince nobody, a name which has never hitherto been annexed to a position which it did not elucidate and establish. The reader will necessarily draw his own, (which can be but one,) inference. Lord S.'s apology then for his desertion of his political tenets resolving itself into a mere *dictum*, or solitary matter of opinion, that Governments should never radically reform their abuses for fear of consequences, I shall oppose to his lordship's the opinions of two other illustrious men, who appear to have thought that a restitution of the securities for Liberty did warrant some considerable risks; the one, Dean Swift, the cement of the Tory Ministry of Queen Anne, the friend of Harley and of Bolingbroke. The other, the most eminent Lawyer of his day, Lord Ashburton. It is true neither of these men witnessed the French Revolution; but the opinion of Swift, which I am going to cite, was written about 30 years after the English Revolution, of which he had been a mature observer, and which unfortunately, as Lord S. will think, for it is very unfortunate indeed

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for his argument, occasioned no bloodshed at all; and the opinion of Dunning was nearly contemporary with the Revolution of America which established her grandeur and independence; an event, which, standing as an encouraging example to all resisters of tyranny, Lord S. may also, by parity of reasoning, think very unfortunate. It was many years after Swift had retired from party, and from politics, that he wrote to Pope, as follows: "As to what is called a Revolution principle, my opinion was this; that whenever those evils, which usually attend and follow a violent change of Government, were not in probability so pernicious as the grievance we suffer under a present power, then the public good will justify such a Revolution." "As to Parliaments, I adore the wisdom of that Gothic institution, which made them annual; and I was confident our liberty could never be placed upon a firm foundation, until that ancient law was restored among us. For who sees not, that while such assemblies are permitted to have a longer duration, there grows up a commerce of Corruption between the Ministry and the Deputies, wherein they both find their accounts, to the manifest danger of liberty? Which traffic would neither answer the design, nor expence, if Parliament met once a year." He then proceeds to "his antipathy to standing armies in time of peace, the abomination of the scheme of Government of setting up a monied interest in opposition to the landed, his incapability of discovering the necessity of suspending any law, upon which the liberty of the most innocent person depended, &c." with other matters equally *irrelevant* to our times. Mr. Dunning's opinion was as follows: "If ever a period should arrive, when the three branches of the legislature should unite in a scheme to destroy the Liberties of the People; or if the House of Commons, forgetting their origin and their duty, should become the mere creatures and slaves of the Crown, it would then be no longer illegal for the Commonality of England to resume their just share in the legislature, and the means whereby they accomplished this, whether by association, by remonstrance, or by force, would be not only right but laudable; It would be an honourable imitation of the conduct of their ancestors, by which the Constitution had been wrested from the

"rapacity and from the violence of pre-rogative." Lord Chatham's opinions to this purport are so well known, that it would be superfluous to quote them.—An opportunity is only now afforded me for a flying word or two on the Jobs and political profligacy of America, which Lord S. asserts far to exceed our own! and therefrom deduces an argument against the meliorations, which we conceive would be accomplished by a purer state of representation. I can readily take for granted, even without Lord S.'s authority for it, that very dirty Jobs are transacted and disgraceful acts committed by politicians every where; but comparisons are odious; and candour really obliges me to suspect that the noble writer, at the instant of a virtuous indignation, may have omitted to make those allowances for America, which she will reasonably require. If America be so full of despicable faction, from which, happily for us, we are exempt, we should on the other hand take into account what we pay to allay faction.—Again, acknowledging, as every Englishman must do with pride, the superior redundancy of our crops of political virtue, let us not, in describing America, reproach her soil with sterility, because it does not spontaneously produce what we force! Lord S. certainly has not treated the Americans fairly, or he would never have drawn a parallel between their wretched, and our happy Government; he ought to have compared them with Kamptschatka or Otaheite. Why, the Grenvilles and the Percevals have offices amongst them of four times the emolument of the salary of the President of the United States; and Mr. Perceval has reversions and possessions in his person of more than double the amount. Even Lord Liverpool, whose eminent services I am as free to acknowledge as his gracious master, has as much emolument as the President of the United States!—Is not this a bounty on political virtue? And can one wonder at its abounding; and when we can so well afford to pay this encouragement, which we besides so cheerfully pay, does it become us in our fine equipage to lord it over and taunt our beggarly neighbours? Lord S. will see that I very cheerfully admit his account of the disgraceful proceedings of the American legislature, hardly to be conceived by us. But still it appears to me that his lordship has not shewn the natural or necessary connection, (which of course must exist) between effective re-

presentation, and political profligacy.—I have no doubt of the fact, but I own I do not see how corruption in the constituent body must unavoidably produce integrity and virtue in the representative; or even (for I am naturally dull) how the public morals of a nation can have been meliorated by transactions between the elector and the elected, which, even in the Edinburgh Reviewers' opinion, "stain them both with dishonour." In good truth, justice compels us to make vast allowances for the Americans. Is it not obvious, that every one should be bred to the calling which he is to practice if he ever hopes to practise it with dexterity? The episode of Sancho's government is admired and approved by every body; and did not Teresa Panza desire her husband to breed his son a Governor for that reason? Can it be expected, that a man born a farmer, or a shop-keeper, or a private land-holder, can ever legislate like another, who is born and bred a legislator? Can an unpractised private man, of between 40 and 50, when bad habits are inveterate, and obstinacy incurable, ever act the prince or the sovereign, like another, who has been born one, and bred to great things, and high contemplations? And as to representation, are not three or four persons who may not know the candidate's name, more likely to be impartial in choosing a fit person to send to legislate for the nation at large, than his neighbours and acquaintances, who are so apt to be biassed by malice, or affection; and who, it is notorious, never see each other but through a medium of prejudice? But if there is one thing above another, wherein the Americans are never enough to be blamed and pitied, it is their blindness, in having lately let pass them the most delightful occasion for going to war, that ever occurred to any nation! I mean, when they passed their famous Non-Importation Act. What would not a war have done for them? It would have raised a debt, and embarked the fortunes of individuals in the stability of the Government; it would have put an army and navy at the disposition of the executive, with commissions, offices, promotions, and jobs, innumerable! all which, with other advantages, are lost. But the thing for which they are the most to be despised, is their having borrowed their Non-Intercourse measure, (in lieu of "a just and necessary war") from the institutions of the visionary Uto-

pia of Sir T. More; a writer of reveries, whom every one knows not to have possessed a single grain of political judgment, or practical wisdom.—But, to be serious over the jobs both of the Government of America and our own, (which have enough in them to make us so) when one considers that the American Government has paid off all its debts; has kept the peace with very bad neighbours; that it rules over a country ten times as large as England, at one fortieth of the expence; that infancy and age there do not go to the poor house, and youth to the gallows; but on the contrary, that a decent and universal independence prevails, without a vestige of any sort of civil, or political monopoly, or religious intolerance; I say, when one contrasts this, on the one hand, with the Jobs Political, Jobs Ecclesiastical, Jobs Military, Jobs Parliamentary, Jobs Oriental, Jobs Official, and finally the Job of Jobs, or Jobometer (as sir F. Bardett pleasantly called it) on the other, one must imagine, that the noble Earl is indulging in an irony, of which we do not see the drift, or else, that he has just this moment arrived from an Island where Flappers, like those in Swift's Laputa, may be indispensable for some time, to those who have lately left it, and that his lordship had written his pamphlet without one. Before concluding, I must thank the noble writer for having omitted one common-place—that of *time*. The language of the plausible and artful, but inveterate Anti-Reformists, used to be that of Felix: "When I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." A better time, however, for reforming than the present, can never recur; for corruptions must and will encrease, and the dangers of Reform, as I have shewn, be proportionate. The only time for accomplishing a Reform is the time, be it when it may, when the nation comes forward, and says, *we must have it*.—This is the time, and there is no other. I conclude with the apostrophe of the most eminent philosopher that our country or any other has produced; who, after laying down that "Time is the greatest innovator," adds, "and if Time, of course, alter things to the worse, and wisdom and counsel shall not alter them to the better, what shall be the end!!!"—I have the honour to remain, Dear Sir, with high esteem and respect, yours, J. C. WORTHINGTON.

Isle of Wight, 20th August, 1809.